AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-17. (cancelled)

18. (previously presented) A fractionatable stable double emulsion, having a polydispersity greater than 30%, of the water-in-oil-in-water type, consisting of 50 to 95% by weight, with respect to the total weight of the double emulsion, of droplets of a monodisperse inverse emulsion Ei dispersed in a continuous aqueous phase; the monodisperse inverse emulsion Ei having a polydispersity of up to and including 30%;

- the continuous aqueous phase comprising a polysaccharide thickening agent at 1 to 10% by weight with respect to the total weight of the continuous aqueous phase; a water-soluble sequenced copolymer of ethylene oxide and propylene oxide as surfactant; and an osmotic pressure balancing agent;

- the emulsion Ei having a viscosity up to and including the viscosity of the continuous aqueous phase and consisting of 50 to 95% by weight, with respect to the total weight of Ei, of droplets of an internal aqueous phase dispersed in an oily phase;

- the internal aqueous phase comprising at least one hydrophilic active substance;

- the oily phase comprising polyglycerol polyricinoleate as surfactant; the concentration of balancing agent being sufficient to ensure osmotic balance between the aqueous phase of the emulsion Ei and the continuous aqueous phase.

19. (previously presented) A double emulsion according to Claim 18, wherein the double emulsion comprises at least 60% by weight of droplets of emulsion Ei with respect to the total weight of the double emulsion.

20. (previously presented) double emulsion according to claim 18, wherein the agent for balancing the osmotic pressure is glucose.

21. (previously presented) A double emulsion according to claim 18, wherein the polysaccharide thickening agent is an alginate.

22. (previously presented) A double emulsion according to claim 21, wherein the alginate has a molar mass of between 3000 and 6000 g/mol.

23. (previously presented) A double emulsion according to claim 18, wherein the formula of the sequenced copolymer is:

$$H-(OCH_2CH_2)_a-(O-CH(CH_3)-CH_2)_b-(OCH_2CH_2)_a-OH \quad (I)$$

in which

a is an integer between 50 and 120; and

b is an integer between 20 and 100.

24. (previously presented) A double emulsion according to Claim 23, wherein the continuous aqueous phase comprises 1 to 5% by weight, with respect to the total weight of the continuous aqueous phase, of alginate, as a thickener; and 3 to 10% by weight with respect to the total weight of the continuous aqueous phase of the sequenced polymer of said formula (I), as a surfactant.

25. (previously presented) A double emulsion according to claim 24, wherein the alginate has a molar mass of between 3000 and 6000 g/mol.

26. (previously presented) A double emulsion according to claim 18, wherein the continuous aqueous phase comprises glucose as osmotic pressure balancing agent, the molar ratio of the glucose concentration in the continuous aqueous phase to the concentration of active substance in the internal aqueous phase being between 1.5 and 2.5.

27. (currently amended) A double emulsion according to claim 18, wherein the oily phase comprises 60 to [[90%]] <u>99%</u> by weight of polyglycerol polyricinoleate and 1 to 40% by weight dodecane.

28. (previously presented) A double emulsion according to claim 18, wherein Ei comprises at least 60% by weight of droplets of internal aqueous phase.

29. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ A method of preparing a stable double emulsion of the water-in-oil-in-water type, having a polydispersity up to and including 30%,

wherein a double emulsion is subjected to a controlled shearing so that the same maximum shearing level is applied to all the emulsion, wherein said double emulsion ~~being~~ prior to controlled shearing is a fractionatable stable double emulsion, having a polydispersity greater than 30%, of the water-in-oil-in-water type, consisting of 50 to 95% by weight, with respect to the total weight of the double emulsion, of droplets of a monodisperse inverse emulsion Ei dispersed in a continuous aqueous phase; the monodisperse inverse emulsion Ei having a polydispersity of up to and including 30%;

- the continuous aqueous phase comprising a polysaccharide thickening agent at 1 to 10% by weight with respect to the total weight of the continuous aqueous phase; a water-soluble sequenced copolymer of ethylene oxide and propylene oxide as surfactant; and an osmotic pressure balancing agent;

- the emulsion Ei having a viscosity up to and including the viscosity of the continuous aqueous phase and consisting of 50 to 95% by weight, with respect to the total weight of Ei, of droplets of an internal aqueous phase dispersed in an oily phase;

- the internal aqueous phase comprising at least one hydrophilic active substance;

- the oily phase comprising polyglycerol polyricinoleate as surfactant; the concentration of balancing agent being sufficient to ensure osmotic balance between the aqueous phase of the emulsion Ei and the continuous aqueous phase.

30. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 29, wherein the controlled shearing is effected by bringing said double emulsion into contact with a moving solid surface, the velocity gradient characterising the flow of emulsion being constant in a direction perpendicular to the said moving solid surface.

31. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 29, wherein the maximum value of the shearing level is 1 to ~~1.105 s-1~~ 1.10^5 s-1.

32. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 29, wherein the maximum value of the shearing level is 100 to 5000 s-1.

33. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 29, wherein the shearing is applied by homogeneous flow of the double emulsion in a cell consisting of two concentric cylinders rotating with respect to each other.

34. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 29, wherein the shearing is applied by homogeneous flow of the double emulsion in a cell consisting of two moving parallel plates oscillating with respect to each other.

35. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 29, wherein the shearing is applied by homogeneous flow of the double emulsion in a cell consisting of two concentric discs rotating with respect to each other.

36. (previously presented) A stable double emulsion, having a polydispersity up to and including 30%, of the-water-in oil-in-water type, consisting of 50 to 95% by weight, with respect to the total weight of the double emulsion, of droplets of a monodisperse inverse emulsion Ei dispersed in a continuous aqueous phase;

- the monodisperse inverse emulsion Ei having a polydispersity of up to and including 30%;

- the continuous aqueous phase comprising a polysaccharide thickening agent at 1 to 10% by weight with respect to the total weight of the continuous aqueous phase; a water-soluble sequenced copolymer of ethylene oxide and propylene oxide as surfactant; and an osmotic pressure balancing agent;

- the emulsion Ei having a viscosity up to and including the viscosity of the continuous aqueous phase and consisting of 50 to 95% by weight, with respect to the total weight of Ei, of droplets of an internal aqueous phase dispersed in an oily phase;

- the internal aqueous phase comprising at least one hydrophilic active substance;

- the oily phase comprising polyglycerol polyricinoleate as surfactant.

37. (previously presented) An emulsion according to claim 36, wherein the mean diameter of the droplets of emulsion Ei is between 1 and 10 µm.